Update on the 2019 Census Test

United States™ Census Bureau
U.S. Department of Commerce
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU
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2019 Census Test
Agenda

- Overview of the 2019 Census Test
- Overall Status of the 2019 Census Test
- Accomplishments: Last 60 Days
- Milestones: January 16 – February 28, 2019
- Risks and Current Issues

2019 Census Test
Overview

- Designed to measure the operational effect of including a citizenship question on self-response rates.
  - Treatment 1 includes all planned 2020 Census questions – the number of people, tenure, sex, age, date of birth, Hispanic origin, race, citizenship, relationship and coverage questions.
  - Treatment 2 includes all planned 2020 Census questions except the question on citizenship.
- July 1, 2019 Census Day.

Purpose

- Test will inform the Integrated Partnership and Communications Campaign.
- Results will help plan for the Nonresponse Followup (NRFU) operation, the operation designed to collect a response in person from housing units that do not self-respond.

Sample Design

- A nation-wide self-response test of 480,000 housing units.
  - Excludes Remote Alaska, Puerto Rico, and the population living in Group Quarters.
- Designed to measure a 0.5 percentage point difference in self-response rates at the national level.
- Stratified to oversample housing units in areas with high proportions of non-citizens and historically low self-response.
- Sample will support limited analysis for race and Hispanic origin subpopulations.

2019 Census Test

Contact Strategy: National Sample

Internet First

1. Letter
2. Letter
3. * Postcard
4. * Paper Questionnaire + Letter
5. * "It's not too late" Postcard

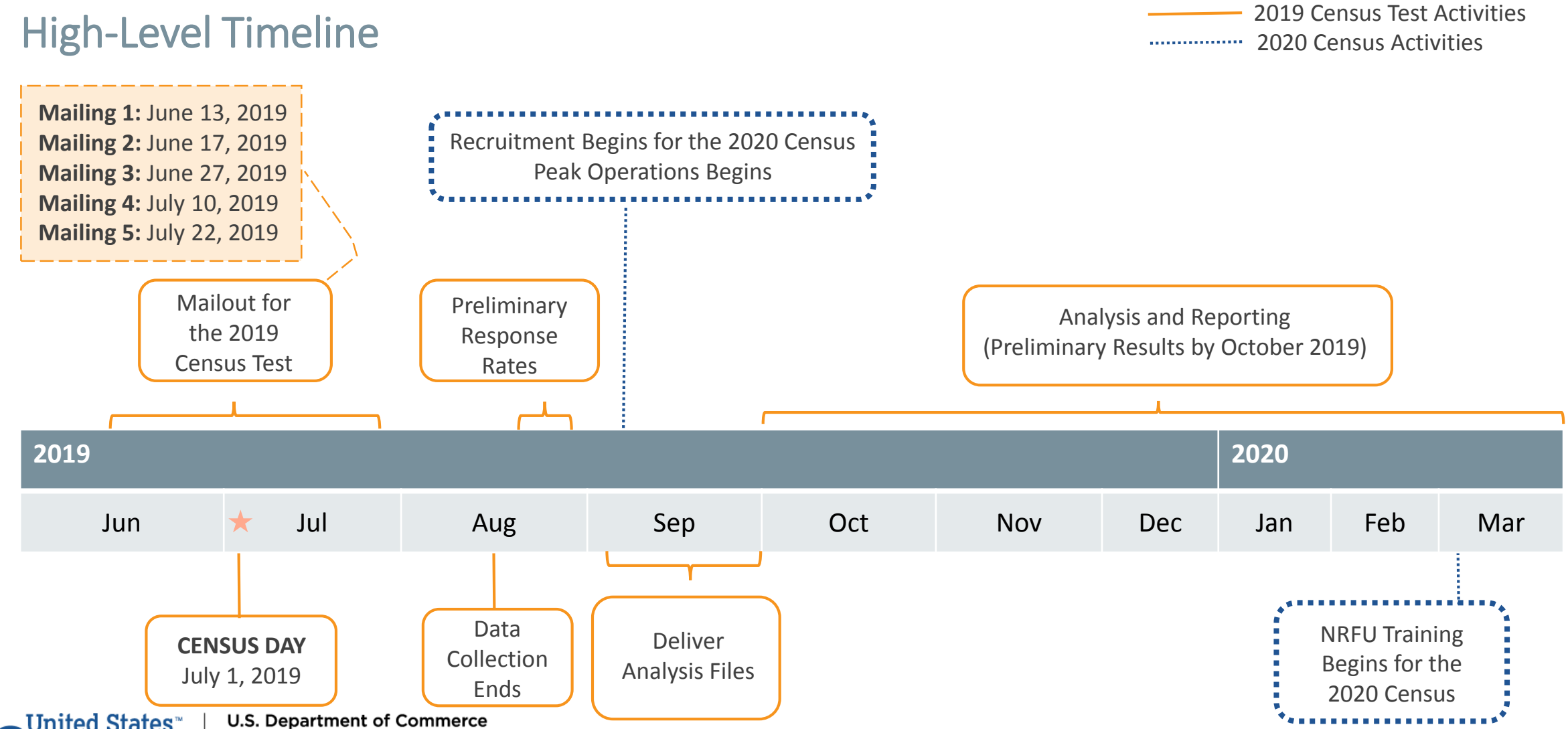
Internet Choice

1. Paper Questionnaire + Letter
2. Letter
3. * Postcard
4. * Paper Questionnaire + Letter
5. * "It's not too late" Postcard

*Mailed only to nonrespondents

2019 Census Test

High-Level Timeline



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2019 Census Test
Budget

Activity/Operation	Final Estimate
Commercial Printing	$131,000
Docuprint at National Processing Center (NPC)	$71,000
Postage	$850,000
Assembly	$282,000
Forms Design	$7,000
NPC Preparation for Mail Returns, PM, Procedures	$24,000
Mail Sort, Check-in, Batching	$50,000
Data Capture, Clerical Coding	$231,000
Telephone Questionnaire Assistance (TQA) Training	$20,000
Internet Instrument	$116,000
TQA, LCC, Debriefing, Testing	$382,000
Total Operational Cost	**$2,164,000**
Census Bureau Headquarters FTE Cost	$3,186,000
Census Bureau HQ Travel	$40,000
Total 2019 Census Test Cost	**$5,390,000**

2019 Census Test
Current Status

Overall	Scope	Schedule	Resources	Stakeholder Engagement
Green	Green	Green	Green	Green

Operation or Activity	Scope	Schedule	Resources	Stakeholder Engagement
Project Management				
Sampling and Analysis				
Mail Materials and Mailout				
Telephone Questionnaire Assistance (TQA)/Interactive Voice Response (IVR)				
Check-In and Batching				
Integrated Computer Assisted Data Entry (iCADE)/Key From Image (KFI)/Coding				
Internet Data Collection				
Address File and Data Processing				
Communications				

2019 Census Test
Accomplishments: Last 60 Days

Date	Accomplishment	
November 1, 2018	Kick-off of the 2019 Census Test	✓
November 19, 2018	Finalized sample design	✓
December 12, 2018	Finalized design of the 2019 Census Test questionnaires and mail materials	✓
December 19, 2018	Finalized sampling specifications	✓
December 31, 2018	Modified contract for the Digital Test Deck operation	✓
January 2, 2019	Awarded print contract; all materials released to print contractor	✓
January 3, 2019	Finalized the 2019 Census Test cost estimate	✓
January 4, 2019	Approved proofs for 2019 Census Test letters and inserts	✓
January 10, 2019	Delivered specifications for internet instrument	✓
January 14, 2019	Began quality assurance for letters and FAQ inserts	✓

2019 Census Test

Milestones: January 16 – February 28, 2019

Date (scheduled)	Description
January 22, 2019	Quality assurance begins for questionnaires and envelopes
January 31, 2019	Census Bureau approves Office of Management and Budget (OMB) package
February 1, 2019	Baseline the schedule
February 11, 2019	Complete sample selection
February 11, 2019	Printed materials delivered to the National Processing Center
February 19, 2019	Department of Commerce (DOC) approves OMB package
February 20, 2019	Deliver address file to the National Processing Center
February 28, 2019	Finalize the analysis plan
February 28, 2019	Publish 30-day Federal Register Notice

2019 Census Test
Risks and Current Issues

- Insufficient staff available to test the 2019 Census Test internet instrument.
  - Will identify additional staff resources within the American Community Survey Office to complete testing.
- Census Bureau and DOC staff required to review OMB package are furloughed.
  - Staff required for 2019 Census Test work should be recalled as needed to complete critical activities.
- Test was designed to leverage American Community Survey (ACS) operational systems; however, due to the government shutdown the ACS operational systems are not being updated.
  - Sample Selection: The ACS files that would have been used for sample selection were not created and/or verified. Instead, the sampling specification for the 2019 Census Test has been updated to read county-level Master Address File (MAF) extracts delivered by the Geography Division.
- Travel requires additional approval by the Department of Commerce.
  - Timely approval is needed for staff travel to conduct quality assurance on-site during printing.
- When the furlough ends and ACS operations resume, staff resources will be diverted to restart the ACS.
  - To address this issue, selected staff have been encouraged to work ahead on the 2019 Census Test in anticipation of the competing priorities.